



S. 2516 – Kendell Frederick Citizenship Assistance Act

FLOOR SITUATION

S. 2516 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) on December 18, 2007. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on March 11, 2008.

S. 2516 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on June 9, 2008.

**Note: The House passed similar legislation (H.R. 2884), which was introduced by Rep. Elijah Cummings (R-MD), by voice vote on November 6, 2007.*

SUMMARY

S. 2516 seeks to facilitate the naturalization application process for members of the Armed Services by requiring the Department of Homeland Security to accept the fingerprints and biometric information that the applicants provided to the Department of Defense when joining the Armed Services. This requirement only applies to those members who applied for naturalization within 24 months of enlistment. The bill requires the Department of Defense to provide the prints and biometric information without charge and to work with the Department of Homeland Security assist this process.

**Note: The House-passed version of this bill only applied this provision to fingerprints, not to biometric information.*

The bill requires DHS, DOD, and the FBI to implement procedures for ensuring quick transmission of this information while safeguarding privacy. It also requires DHS to process these applications within 180 days of receiving the responses to all the background checks.

The legislation includes a study and two reporting requirements regarding the procedures for handling naturalization applications from members of the Armed Services as well as recommendations for how to improve the implementation.

BACKGROUND

Under current law, the Department of Homeland Security does not accept the fingerprints and biometric information provided during enlistment in the Armed Services for its naturalization application.

The bill is named for Specialist Kendell Frederick, a native and citizen of Trinidad, who was killed by a roadside bomb on October 19, 2005, in Iraq as he traveled in a convoy to a base to get fingerprinted for naturalization. He had been trying for more than a year to become a U.S. citizen. He was posthumously granted U.S. citizenship.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office has not yet scored S. 2516. CBO estimates that the House-passed bill, which is similar to S. 2516, would result in no significant costs to DHS. ([CBO Estimate for H.R. 2884](#))

STAFF CONTACT

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